

**NORTHBROOK, IL** – At a roundtable meeting today for 10th Congressional District mayors, U.S. Representative Mark Kirk announced a proposal to triple the federal dollars available to fight an invasive beetle that threatens to wipe out Illinois' 140 million ash trees. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has already destroyed more than 20 million trees since its introduction to the United States from Asia in 2002. Five states have reported the presence of EAB, including Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan and Ohio. Since 2006, two communities in the 10th Congressional District have reported trees infected with EAB – Wilmette and Winnetka.

"The Emerald Ash Borer is the single greatest invasive species threat in the Chicago area," Congressman Kirk said. "The U.S. Department of Agriculture was appropriated \$10 million for quarantine and prevention efforts in 2007. We need to more than double that number if we are to stem the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer. Congress is considering lifting funding to \$30 million for 2008. I will work to help deliver these sorely needed funds to help our communities battle this dangerous pest."

Nearly 20 village presidents, mayors and managers were on hand to hear EAB presentations from Steve Knight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Mark Cinnamon of the Illinois Department of Agriculture and Nancy Pollard of the University of Illinois' Cook County Extension Office. Chris Canning, village president of Wilmette, also discussed his community's efforts to combat the beetle.

"I applaud the quick and decisive actions that village presidents like Chris Canning of Wilmette have taken to stop the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer," Congressman Kirk said. "Once a beetle has invaded a tree, the mortality rate is 100 percent. The most important steps we can take are to isolate and contain infected ash trees before the problem spreads."

Mayors and village presidents who attended the summit included:

- Mayor Steve Harris, Deerfield
- Village President Scott Feldman, Glencoe
- Village Trustee Paul Detlefs, Glenview
- Mayor Mike Belsky, Highland Park
- Mayor Vincent Donofrio, Highwood
- Village President Tolbert Chisum, Kenilworth
- Village Administrator Kent Street, Lake Bluff

- Mayor Michael Rummel, Lake Forest
- Village President Jeffrey Harger, Libertyville
- Mayor Irvana Wilks, Mount Prospect
- Assistant Director of Public Works Kelly Hamill, Northbrook
- Village President John Birkenbine, Northfield
- Village Trustees Judy Abruscato, Ken Brady and Dean Argiris, Wheeling
- Village President Christopher Canning, Wilmette
- Village Manager Doug Williams, Winnetka

The Illinois Department of Agriculture established a quarantine on the intrastate transport of all ash tree products and firewood in northern Cook County last year. Residents who believe an ash tree has been infected should quickly contact their village and the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

More information on EAB issues can be found at [www.house.gov/kirk](http://www.house.gov/kirk) .